

December 3, 2017  
Sermon for The First Sunday in Advent  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
John 1:1–5

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

John 1:1–5 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Grace, Mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Amen.

“You have my word!”

It’s easy to become skeptical when someone says that—when they give us their word. And why is that?

It’s because we live in a world of broken promises. There are empty vows, pledges made...only to be forgotten. Assurances given...then ignored.

Words can be spoken with great fanfare. “I’ll always love you.” “We’re BFF’s—best friends forever!” “You can count on me!” “Till death do us part.”

But words can be like autumn leaves in October’s wind.

That’s why we’re a bit skeptical when someone says, “You have my word!”

This Advent we are going to be working our way through John 1:1–18. And God’s biggest promise in John’s introduction to his Gospel is this—“You have my Word!” John 1:1, “*In the beginning was the Word.*”

John 1:14, “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*”

If John’s first eighteen verses are about anything, they are about the Word.

God’s Word; God’s Word, who is Jesus Christ!

We have God’s Word! John 1:1–18 provides both a summary of John’s themes and is the lens through which we are to read everything John writes in his Gospel. Here is an overview of these verses:

**Jesus is the Word**—God makes Himself heard. (John 1:1–2) God is not silent!

God speaks! God makes His presence known in Christ!

**Jesus is the Life**—God makes Himself touchable. (John 1:4a)

God is not a vague thought or an abstract idea!

God is tangible in Jesus and **Jesus is the Light**—God makes Himself visible. (John 1:4b–13)

God is not disconnected or hidden in darkness. God is visible!

**Jesus is the Son**—God makes Himself knowable in the Word. (John 1:14–18)

And because He makes Himself known God is not a mystery to solve!

God is knowable!                      What's it all mean?

It means that because of Jesus we can hear, experience, see, and know God.

Today's focus is Jesus is the Word. God makes Himself easy to hear.

**The Word is connected to creation.** *“In the beginning was the Word.”*

(John 1:1a) *“In the beginning”* takes us back to Genesis 1:1, This was one of the first verses that I learned in Greek. It was memorable for me because the Greek word for beginning is αρχηε , like archaic. In my mind that's really old, the beginning of time old. *“In the beginning”* Εν αρχηε *“God created the heavens and the earth.”*

John 1:1–5 further connects the Word, Jesus, with Genesis 1 because John uses the words “life,” “light” and “darkness.”

For instance, in Genesis 1:3 God says, *“Let there be light.’ And there was light.”* Your words can't do that. Neither can mine. But God's Word can.

And God's Word does! God's Word is connected to creation.

In fact, God's Word created all creation!

Consider more verses that exalt the power of God's Word.

Joshua 21:45, *“Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord made has failed.”* Isaiah 40:8, *“Grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”* Isaiah 55:11, *“My word will not return to me empty.”* Psalm 119:105, *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*

Here’s the point. The most powerful force in the world is **God’s Word!** God’s Word called Abraham from Ur in the land of the Chaldeans; spoke to Moses from a burning bush; gave manna and quail in the wilderness; thundered from Sinai; and spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice.

God’s Word even made dry bones come to life and stand on their feet, a vast army!            Just ask Ezekiel!

God said it.    That settles it.    Faith believes it!    We have His Word!

**The Word is connected to God.** *“The Word was God.”* (John 1:1b)

God’s powerful creating Word is more than just an utterance or an idea or a combination of letters.    The Word was God.            The Word is God!

The Word is Jesus!

Jesus isn’t a junior partner with God.

Jesus isn’t the vice president of the universe.

Jesus is 100 percent, fully, actually, really *God*.

In Exodus 3:14 God tells Moses, *“I am who I am.”*

To prove that Jesus is this God, the God, John records seven *“I am”* statements of the Savior. John 6:35, *“I am the Bread of Life.”* John 8:12, *“I am the Light of the World.”* John 10:7, *“I am the Door.”* John 10:14, *“I am the Good Shepherd.”*

John 11:25, *"I am the Resurrection and the Life."* John 14:6, *"I am the Way and the Truth and the Life."* John 15:1, *"I am the true Vine."*

The Word is connected to God. ... The Word **is** God!

**The Word is connected to us.** *"In him was life, and that life was the light of men."* (John 1:4)

The Word is connected to creation. *"Let there be light.' And there was light."*

This Word is connected to God. In fact, the Word is God! And now, in great love, the Word (this Word!) connects to us!

How? As light! The light of the world!

Since we are coming up on Christmas, let's talk about gifts. Who would think that a clock would be a good Christmas gift for an Eight year old boy?

It was orange, and square and not exactly cool. But it was a gift that I had asked for. I was expecting a cool radio alarm clock so I could listen to my own music in my own room, but opening the gift and seeing a little square, orange, alarm clock wasn't exactly the kind of gift thrilled me that morning. But I said thank you and took it to my room, put it on my homework desk and plugged it in.

But you know, I soon became quite attached to that little square, orange alarm clock. It had a snooze button that I used to time how long each homework paper took, it kept my overactive brain occupied and almost made homework fun...almost. But the best part of that ugly little alarm clock was that it glowed in the dark. It had a back light that was just bright enough that I could see where I was going in the middle of the night.

And let me tell you, when your room is dark, your best friend is light!

I have had many different clocks in my bedroom since I was eight years old, but I still find comfort from their soft light in the middle of a long night.

We all know about dark rooms. And not just at nighttime. We face darkness in loneliness, depression, shame, guilt, emptiness, anger, sickness, and even death. Sooner or later, something scary will sneak into the room, and it becomes dark, very dark.

Then, just when we don't expect him, the prince of darkness shows up, pointing his accusing finger at us—mocking our feeble discipleship in Christ, our failed relationships and our fatal, sinful ways. “do you really think the Babe in Bethlehem really paid for your sins? Yours!! Ha!! Why would He care about you?

But you're never alone in the dark ... you have the Light!  
And not some little alarm clock light that can be blocked out.

John 1:5, “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” Notice the verb “shines.”

It's a present tense verb. John doesn't write “the light shone” or “the light will shine.” No. John writes, “*The light shines in the darkness.*”

In your darkness; in your deepest darkness; in the darkest hours of your life, this Light shines. And “*the darkness has not overcome it.*”

With those last words John prepares us for Good Friday.  
Talk about a dark day! Nails. Blood. Sweat. Tears. Darkness.

Oh my ... the darkness! Hours of darkness!  
And then death.

Three days later, though, the Light shines, again, present tense, shines not shone.

The darkness will never overcome Jesus. The darkness will never overcome you!

And why is that?                      We have God's Word!

John 14:2, "*In my Father's house are many rooms. I am going there to prepare a place for you.*" John 14:27, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.*" John 16:33, "*In this world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer! I have overcome the world.*" Jesus has overcome the world for you!

Press into God's Word. Press hard into God's Word.

When fears appear, say, "But God said..."

When doubts arise, say, "But God said..."

When guilt overwhelms, say, "But God said..."                      (eraser?)

Search God's Word like you are searching for great treasure, because it is!

Once you find a pearl, grasp it.    Trust it.

Many people ask us to trust them. Salesmen ask us to trust all the time. Are their words true? Sometimes. Doctors ask us to trust them with our lives. It's hard sometimes, but when we go under the knife, we can only pray and hope for the best. When we fly in an airplane, we really trust the pilot with our lives, because we have no control of the plane and sometimes the pilots have very little control too.

We give our word too. In marriage vows, in Ordination vows, or even just a handshake with a neighbor. By God's grace, we do our best to follow through.

But we are still human and we do fail sometimes.

Even when we have every intention of fulfilling our promise, sometimes the world interferes, sometimes we make mistakes.

But God's Word is a Word that we can trust. God's Word never fails. God's Word was promised, delivered in a manger, walked the earth and took on and carried all of our sins to the cross, where He, Jesus Christ, paid for them all.

God's Word never fails!

Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen.

S.D.G.—Soli Deo Gloria

## **Sermon Outline**

### ***You Have My Word***

*John 1:1-5*

- I. Jesus is the Word.
- II. The Word is connected to creation.
- III. The Word is connected to us.